DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END

TOM TAYLOR | MARCO FAILLA | RENATO GUEDES | REX LOKUS

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TOM TAYLOR WRITER MARCO FAILLA RENATO GUEDES CARMINE DI GIANDOMENICO
KARL MOSTERT DANIELE DI NICUOLO DUSTIN NGUYEN TREVOR SCOTT JON SOMMARIVA ARTISTS
REX LOKUS COLORIST SAIDA TEMOFONTE LETTERER FRANCESCO MATTINA COLLECTION COVER ARTISTS

BEN ABERNATHY EDITOR – ORIGINAL SERIES & COLLECTED EDITION
STEVE COOK DESIGN DIRECTOR – BOOKS
LOUIS PRANDI PUBLICATION DESIGN
CHRISTY SAWYER PUBLICATION PRODUCTION

MARIE JAVINS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, DC COMICS

DANIEL CHERRY III SENIOR VP – GENERAL MANAGER
JIM LEE PUBLISHER & CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER
JOEN CHOE VP – GLOBAL BRAND & CREATIVE SERVICES
DON FALLETTI VP – MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS & WORKFLOW MANAGEMENT
LAWRENCE GANEM VP – TALENT SERVICES
ALISON GILL SENIOR VP – MANUFACTURING & OPERATIONS
NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – MANUFACTURING ADMINISTRATION & DESIGN
NANCY SPEARS VP – REVENUE

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BURBANK, CA 91505

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #1 COVER ART: BEN OLIVER

I NEVER WANTED TO BE A WAR PHOTOGRAPHER.

BUT HERE WE ARE.

I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M DOCUMENTING THIS.

IT JUST FEELS LIKE THERE SHOULD BE A RECORD.

A RECORD OF THIS MOMENT.

OF THESE HEROES.

I WANT THEM TO BE REMEMBERED.

Editor In Chief
Perry White

TWO WEEKS AGO
THE *DAILY PLANET.*

JIMMY, THIS IS...I CAN'T BELIEVE I USED TO MAKE YOU FETCH ***COFFEE.***

YOU GOT A PICTURE OF ***SUPERMAN*** BREAKING ***DARKSEID'S FACE.***

YEP.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GOT SO CLOSE TO THAT FIGHT. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO YELL AT YOU OR ***KISS*** YOU.

CAN I FORMALLY REQUEST YOU DON'T DO BOTH AT THE SAME TIME, CHIEF?

A YELL-AND-KISS COMBO SOUNDS ALL KINDS OF DISTURBING.

THIS IS OUTSTANDING WORK, OLSEN. I COULDN'T BE MORE...

DING

CHIEF--?

YOU, AH, TRAILED OFF IN MID-PRAISE THERE, AND I DON'T WANT TO SEEM TOO DESPERATE FOR YOUR APPROVAL, BUT--

=HNNG=

CHIEF!

IT STARTED WITH A SINGLE SCREAM.

AAAGGHHHH

AND THEN EVERYONE WAS SCREAMING...

...AND CHANGING.

CLK

I GRABBED THE PEOPLE AROUND ME. THE PEOPLE WHO WERE STILL THEMSELVES.

RON! CAT!

THE BROADCAST ROOM. GO!

CLOSE THE DOOR!

CLOSE THE DAMN DOOR!

WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING?

IT WAS A TECHNO-ORGANIC VIRUS, UNLEASHED ON THE WORLD.

A CORRUPTED ANTI-LIFE EQUATION FROM APOKOLIPS THAT TOOK HOLD OF ANYONE WHO SAW IT THROUGH DIGITAL DEVICES.

THE PHONES.

WHAT?

NO PHONES.

JIMMY! I HAVE TO CALL MY--

NO PHONES!

CRASH

HRRK!

AIIGH!

THEY HAD BECOME BLIGHTED ONES.

AGENTS OF THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION.

THMP THMP

THMP

THMP THMP

THE DOOR! BARRICADE THE DOOR!

HOLD IT!!

HOLD--!

THMP THMP

RRR.

AND THEN THERE WAS QUIET...

...AND A STREAK OF RED AND BLUE.

SUPERMAN.

I'M GLAD YOU...

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, JIMMY.

YOU DIDN'T USE YOUR SIGNAL WATCH?

NO. I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO NEEDED YOU.

CAN YOU LOOK AFTER THESE PEOPLE?

OF COURSE.

THAT WOULD BE A GREAT HELP. THANK YOU.

STAY HERE. STAY SAFE...

"...I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I CAN."

IN THE TIME SUPERMAN WAS GONE, WE LOST SO MANY.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD.

AND TOO MANY HEROES.

AND THEN, THE UNTHINKABLE...

...CAPTAIN ATOM EXPLODED.

MY GOD.

AND THREE CITIES WERE GONE.

INCLUDING METROPOLIS.

EVERYONE WAS DESTROYED IN AN INSTANT...

...EXCEPT US.

WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

WE SURVIVED.

IN A BUBBLE OF GREEN.

THE WHOLE CITY. OUR FRIENDS. OUR FAMILIES.

MOM. WHAT DO WE DO?

FOR THOSE OF US WHO LIVED IN METROPOLIS....

...IT WAS LIKE WE'D JUST LOST OUR WHOLE WORLD.

IT'S GONE.

IT'S ALL JUST... GONE.

THERE WAS NOTHING WE COULD DO.

BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP THE GUILT.

I'M SORRY.

LOSING OUR CITY SHOOK ME...

...SEEING A CRACK APPEAR IN THE MAN OF STEEL SHOOK ME ALMOST AS MUCH.

SUPERMAN IS MY BEST FRIEND.

SUPERMAN? ARE YOU--?

IT'S OKAY, DIANA. I'M READY.

I'D SEEN HIM HURT BEFORE, BUT NOT LIKE THAT.

JUST BECAUSE BULLETS BOUNCE OFF A GUY, IT DOESN'T MEAN HE'S INVULNERABLE.

READY TO WHAT?

READY TO HELP.

BUT AS QUICK AS THE CRACK APPEARED, IT WAS SEALED AGAIN.

LIKE ALL OF US, HE'D JUST LOST SO MUCH. FRIENDS. FAMILY. HIS CITY.

DINAH. TAKE EVERYONE TO THE ARCTIC. TO THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE.

LOIS WILL LET YOU IN.

BUT SUPERMAN WASN'T THINKING ABOUT WHO WAS GONE.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WHERE WE'RE NEEDED.

HE WAS ONLY THINKING ABOUT WHO WAS STILL OUT THERE.

THERE SHOULD BE A RECORD. A RECORD OF THIS MOMENT. OF THESE HEROES.

CLK

clk

I WANT THEM TO BE REMEMBERED.

THERE SHOULD BE A RECORD OF THEIR SACRIFICE.

I MEAN, I'M NEVER GOING TO FORGET WHAT I WAS SAVED FROM. HOWEVER LONG I LIVE, I WILL LIVE WITH THE **REMINDER.**

BUT I WANT EVERYONE TO REMEMBER THE HEROES WHO FOUGHT FOR THE LIVING, AFTER TOMORROW.

TOMORROW COULD BE THEIR LAST DAY.

TOMORROW THE GREATEST HEROES LEFT ON EARTH TRY TO HALT THE **ANTI-LIFE ARMY.**

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #2 COVER ART: FRANCESCO MATTINA

THE PALACE OF KAHNDAQ.

WITHIN MINUTES OF THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION TOUCHING DOWN ON EARTH, IT REACHED EVERY CONNECTED PLACE ON THE PLANET AND STARTED SPREADING, EXPONENTIALLY...

...IN EVERY COUNTRY EXCEPT ONE.

<TAKE KAHNDAQ OFFLINE!>*

*TRANSLATED TO ENGLISH.

HRR.

KAHNDAQ WAS DISCONNECTED WITH A KEYSTROKE.

THE ONE BENEFIT OF HAVING A DICTATOR, I GUESS.

UTTER CONTROL.

DEET

AND WITH THAT ACTION, KAHNDAQ BECAME THE LEAST INFECTED NATION ON EARTH.

BUT STILL THE CORRUPTED ANTI-LIFE EQUATION WAS OUT THERE, AND IT WAS SPREADING THROUGH BLOOD.

BLACK ADAM HAD THE WISDOM OF ZEHUTI. HE KNEW FOR EVERY INNOCENT HE STOPPED TO SAVE, A HUNDRED WOULD FALL.

SO, WHEN HIS PEOPLE LOOKED TO HIM FOR SALVATION...

HE IS HERE!

YOUR GRACE. HELP US!

...THEY FACED ONLY A STORM.

WITH THE SPEED OF HERU, BLACK ADAM FLEW THROUGH HIS COUNTRY.

WITH THE FORCE OF ATON, HE DESTROYED EVERY TRACE OF THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION HE COULD FIND.

HE DID SO WITHOUT HESITATION.

SPEED WAS MORE CRITICAL THAN MERCY.

IT IS DONE.

WHAT IS DONE?

YOUR GRACE?

WHAT DID YOU DO?

I SAVED KAHNDAQ.

I'M SORRY.

HE'S HERE! ANDY, LOOK!

CAN HE SEE US, DAD?

I SAW YOU, ANDY.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT...

"...WE'LL GET YOU TO SAFETY."

THANK YOU!

I CAN'T PROTECT THEM HERE FOREVER. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH THEM ALL?

I THINK I CAN HELP WITH THAT...

...I MAY HAVE FOUND SOME HOPE.

MARTIAN MANHUNTER!

J'ONN!

HELLO, DINAH.

THAT'S A GOOD COLOR ON YOU.

J'ONN? WHAT HOPE HAVE YOU FOUND?

I MAY HAVE FOUND A *REFUGE*. WONDER WOMAN, SUPERMAN, I THINK YOU'LL HAVE A BETTER CHANCE THERE THAN ME.

WHERE?

"KAHNDAQ."

THAT'S FAR ENOUGH.

BLACK ADAM. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ALIVE.

IS IT?

WHAT DO YOU WANT HERE?

WE'RE HOPING TO FIND REFUGE FOR SURVIVORS.

AND WHY WOULD YOU THINK THERE IS SAFETY WITHIN MY BORDERS?

MARTIAN MANHUNTER HAS SEEN YOUR NATION. HE SAYS--

I GAVE NO PERMISSION TO ENTER MY COUNTRY.

I SIMPLY--

YOU *SIMPLY* INVADED, MARTIAN.

PLEASE. WE COULD WORK *WITH* YOU. I DON'T KNOW HOW YOUR NATION OVERCAME THIS, BUT--

KAHNDAQ SURVIVED THIS BECAUSE ITS RULER HAD THE STRENGTH TO DO WHAT YOU *NEVER* COULD, SUPERMAN.

YOU CAN TEAR THROUGH THESE MONSTERS FASTER THAN THE SPEED OF SOUND. YOU CAN REDUCE THE INFECTED TO ASHES WITH A *GLANCE*. WILL YOU?

WITH ALL YOUR GREAT POWER, CAN YOU DESTROY THE INFECTED, SUPERMAN?

NO.

BUT IF YOU OPEN KAHNDAQ TO SURVIVORS, WE CAN HELP PROTECT YOUR BORDERS AND YOUR PEOPLE, ALONG WITH EARTH'S REFUGEES.

SO MUCH POWER. AND YET SO WEAK.

COMPASSION *ISN'T* WEAKNESS.

MY PEOPLE DO NOT NEED *COMPASSION*. THEY NEED TO KNOW YOU WILL END THE UNLIVING TO SAVE THEM. THAT YOUR MORALITY WILL NEVER COME BEFORE THEIR LIVES.

LEAVE MY BORDERS. DO NOT RETURN.

GOODBYE, SUPERMAN.

WE WOULD BE STRONGER *TOGETHER*, BLACK ADAM.

YOU'RE MAKING A CHOICE WITH THE WISDOM OF A *GOD*.

FOR THE WORLD, AND FOR KAHNDAQ, THINK ON THIS WITH THE HEART OF A MAN.

SURE, THERE'S THE STRENGTH AND THE FLYING AND THE HEAT VISION AND ALL THAT, BUT SUPERMAN HAS ANOTHER POWER, TOO.

THEY'RE GONE?

YES. THEY ASKED FOR HELP. FOR KAHNDAQ TO OPEN ITS BORDERS TO OUTSIDERS. THEY OFFERED THEIR PROTECTION.

I SAID NO.

YES.

DO THE PEOPLE SEE IT THAT WAY? DO THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT I DID FOR THEM?

THEY... THEY ARE HURTING.

HE'S PERSUASIVE.

DO YOU, VORENUS, AGREE WITH MY DECISION?

I BELIEVE YOU ARE DOING WHAT'S BEST FOR OUR NATION, YOUR GRACE.

AS I DID WHEN THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION ATTACKED.

BUT THEY WILL EVENTUALLY COME TO REALIZE YOUR ACTIONS *SAVED* OUR NATION.

YOU *EXCISED* THE INFECTION BEFORE IT COULD TAKE HOLD.

I AM GOING FOR A WALK.

A *WALK*, YOUR GRACE?

SHAZAM.

HE HAS A WAY OF BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN PEOPLE.

I WANT TO SEE OUR NATION AND ITS PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT EYES.

THEY'RE SCARED.

OF COURSE THEY'RE SCARED. THEY...

SPEAK HONESTLY. WITHOUT FEAR. PLEASE.

YOU FLEW ACROSS THE ENTIRE COUNTRY RAINING DEATH FROM THE SKIES. WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

DO YOU BELIEVE WE SHOULD OFFER REFUGE TO THE WORLD?

I BELIEVE KAHNDAQ CAN ALWAYS BE MORE.

IT CAN. THIS ATTACK RECOGNIZES NO BORDERS. AND IT WOULD BE ARROGANT TO ASSUME BLACK ADAM CAN DEFEND THE NATION ALONE IF THE REST OF THE WORLD FALLS.

I WOULD BE A BETTER SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE IF I ACCEPTED HELP. IF I--

YOUR GRACE...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YOU'RE FROM THE PALACE?

IT'S ALL RIGHT. SPEAK.

MY SON. HE WAS HURT IN OUR LORD'S ATTACK.

BLACK ADAM DID NOT ATTACK. HE...

WE WILL HELP, IF WE CAN.

SHOW HIM TO ME.

HE'S IN HIS ROOM. HE'S IN PAIN.

HRRRR.

SHA...

SHK

...ZAAAAM!!

HRAAARGH!!

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #3
COVER ART: CARMINE DI GIANDOMENICO
COVER COLOR: REX LOKUS

LINDA. STAY HERE.

STAY SAFE. DON'T LOOK AT ANY SCREENS. KEEP THE DOOR BARRED.

WALLY...

I'LL BE BACK AS QUICKLY AS I CAN.

KEYSTONE CITY. THE FLASH MUSEUM.

MY NAME IS WALLY WEST.

I'M THE FASTEST MAN ON EARTH...

...AND I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SPREAD SO QUICKLY.

A VIRUS HAS HIT EARTH. SPREADING DIGITALLY...

...THROUGH SCREENS...

...AND THROUGH BLOOD.

EVERY SECOND I STAND STILL IS A SECOND LOST. A SECOND MY CITY DOESN'T HAVE.

SO I DON'T STAND STILL.

I DON'T STOP.

I KEEP RUNNING.

I KEEP SAVING.

I DESTROY SCREENS AS QUICKLY AS I CAN. TRYING TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS.

I'M RUNNING FASTER THAN SOUND. FASTER THAN THOUGHT. I APPROACH THE SPEED OF LIGHT. I KNOW I'M GOING TOO FAST, BUT I CAN'T SLOW DOWN. I CAN'T LOSE THIS RACE.

...THE **SPEED FORCE.** THE SOURCE OF SPEEDSTERS' POWER. WHERE WE RUN FOREVER.

I FEEL ITS PULL. AND I WANT TO JOIN WITH IT. THIS FORCE WELCOMING ME **HOME**...

THEN, FOR A BRILLIANT MOMENT, I BRUSH AGAINST IT...

WALLY!

HUH...?

BATMAN?

WALLY. LISTEN. I NEED YOU TO HIDE.

NO.

WALLY. IF THIS VIRUS TAKES YOU...

I'LL BE A THREAT TO THE WHOLE WORLD. I GET IT. YOU'RE NOT ALWAYS RIGHT, BATMAN. YOU'RE JUST VERY CONFIDENT.

BARRY LISTENED TO ME.

GOOD FOR BARRY. I'M GOING TO SAVE MY CITY.

DON'T GET SCRATCHED. DON'T LOOK AT A SCREEN.

GOT IT. SORRY. I REALLY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS CONVERSATION. SEEYA, BRUCE. TELL DICK TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLE.

GOODBYE, WALLY.

GODSPEED.

I'M NOT FAST ENOUGH.

I CAN SLOW THE SPREAD. BUT I CAN'T BE IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE.

YES I CAN.

BART.
YEAH, MAX?
CAN YOU NOT HEAR THE NEIGHBORS SCREAMING?
UH-HUH. MR. PETERSON INSISTED HE COULD PUT SOME SHELVES TOGETHER WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTIONS. IT WAS NEVER GONNA END WELL.
IT SOUNDS A LITTLE MORE INTENSE THAN SCANDINAVIAN FURNITURE BUILDING.
I'LL CHECK STRAIGHT AFTER THIS GAME.
WALLY? NOOO! NOT THE TV!
CRSSSH
IT TAKES LESS THAN A PICOSECOND TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO IMPULSE AND MAX MERCURY.
IT WOULD BE FASTER, BUT BART INTERRUPTS SEVERAL TIMES WITH "EXPERT ZOMBIE KNOWLEDGE."
A QUARTER OF A SECOND LATER...
...AND WE ADD JESSE QUICK TO OUR GROUP.
KEEP STOPPING THE SPREAD IN KEYSTONE.
I'LL LOOK FOR SOMEWHERE SAFE WE CAN MOVE PEOPLE TO, NEARBY.

BUT EVERYWHERE I LOOK IS THE SAME.

CENTRAL CITY.

HUH?

NEW YORK.

WHAT THE--?

GOTHAM

DID YOU HEAR SOMEONE?

YAY! ARE YOU HEARING VOICES, RED? I HOPE YOUR VOICES ARE NICER THAN MINE!

THERE'S NOWHERE SAFE TO MOVE THE KEYSTONE RESIDENTS TO. EVERY CITY IN THE STATES IS INFECTED. PROBABLY THE ENTIRE EARTH.

THEN WE NEED ANOTHER EARTH.

I'M THE FASTEST MAN ON EARTH, BUT EVEN I'M NOT FAST ENOUGH TO OPEN A RIFT BETWEEN WORLDS BY MYSELF...

...THAT TAKES TWO.

THE TANDEM COSMIC TREADMILL. JAY AND BARRY ONCE USED THIS TO OPEN A HOLE IN SPACE.

THIS IS OUR BEST OPTION FOR KEYSTONE.

YOU AND BART ARE FASTER THAN US, WALLY.

YOU'RE GOING TO RUN, AT TOP SPEED, TO OPEN AN EXIT FROM THIS WORLD TO ANOTHER, AND KEEP GOING LONG ENOUGH FOR MAX AND ME TO EVACUATE 200,000 PEOPLE THROUGH IT.

SO, YOU'RE GOING TO BE OUT THERE, BATTLING ZOMBIES, WHILE I JUST...RUN IN A STRAIGHT LINE?

YES.

BUT, YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, YOU'RE NOT AS FAST AS ME. I SHOULD BE OUT THERE.

IT'S THE ONLY WAY THIS CAN WORK, BART.

YOU NEED TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T MOVE THE VIRUS WITH THE SURVIVORS. NO DEVICES. NO INFECTED.

YEAH. WE'RE ASKING AN ALTERNATE EARTH TO ACCEPT 200,000 REFUGEES.

LET'S NOT BRING AN UNDEAD SUPER-VIRUS WITH US AS WELL. CAN'T SEE THAT ENDEARING US TO THE LOCALS.

OKAY...

...RUN.

A PORTAL OPENS TO ANOTHER WORLD.

AND THE EVACUATION OF A CITY BEGINS.

LINDA IS ONE OF THE FIRST TO GO THROUGH.

I MAKE A MENTAL NOTE TO GIVE MAX A VERY BIG HUG ONCE THIS IS OVER.

TWELVE MINUTES LATER, 146,000 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CARRIED TO SAFETY. TWELVE MINUTES...

...IT FEELS LIKE FOREVER.

THE SPEED WE HAVE TO MAINTAIN. THE CONCENTRATION.

KNOWING IF WE SLOW DOWN, OUR ESCAPE IS GONE.

THAT'S THE LAST OF THEM.

YOU TWO, GET YOUR BUTTS--

THEN IT HAPPENS.

BART COLLAPSES.

BART!

THOOM

KEEP RUNNING. I'LL GET HIM!

KEEP IT OPEN!

MAX?

DAMN IT.

I CAN'T DO IT.

NOT ALONE.

MY LUNGS ARE ON FIRE. MY HEART IS BEATING IN MY BRAIN. I CAN'T KEEP THE DOORWAY OPEN ANY LONGER.

I'M FALLING.

I'M--

WALLY!

WITH THE SPEED OF MERCURY, WE BURST THROUGH TO ANOTHER WORLD.

MAX. THAT WAS--

THERE'S NO TIME.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WE DID IT. WE SAVED THE CITY. WE ESCAPED...

AND THEN, TIME STOPS.

MAX? YOU...

SORRY, KID.

NOT AS FAST AS I ONCE WAS.

NO.

MY MIND IS RACING. A MILLION IDEAS ARE DISCARDED.

I CAN FEEL IT COMING, WALLY.

YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

MAX! PLEASE...

I CAN FEEL IT CRAWLING THROUGH MY BODY.

NOTHING I THINK OF SAVES MAX.

YOU HAVE TO END ME. NOW.

NOTHING EXCEPT...

...WE CAN'T SAVE MAX'S LIFE...

GOODBYE, BART. I LOVE YOU. BE GOOD.

...BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE HAVE TO LOSE HIM TO THIS DAMN THING.

WE TRANSFER SOME OF OUR SPEED TO MAX...

...AND WE RUN.

WE RUN THROUGH SOUND.

WE RUN THROUGH LIGHT.

WE RUN INTO SILENCE AND CALM.

AND MAX IS STILL RUNNING.

MAX MERCURY ENTERS THE SPEED FORCE. I SEE HIM SMILE AND THEN...

THANK YOU, WALLY.

...HE'S GONE.

A STREAK OF BLUE. OUTPACING PAIN. OUTPACING DEATH.

RUNNING FOREVER.

HOME.

DAILY PL
DON

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #4 COVER ART: YASMINE PUTRI

JOTUNHEIM. THE MASSIVE FORTRESS IN QURAC WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BUILT BY GIANTS.

IT WASN'T, BUT IT'S A NICE STORY.

THE AERIE FLEW FOR THREE DAYS TO REACH IT.

THEIR FAMILY, AND EVERYONE THEY'D GROWN UP WITH ON THE ISLAND NATION OF BADHNISIA, HAD BEEN CONSUMED BY THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION.

THEY'D NEVER FLOWN SO FAR, BUT LANDING WASN'T AN OPTION.

THE GROUND WAS FULL OF DEATH.

YOU NEED TO REST. YOU'RE EXHAUSTED.

WHAT'S EXHAUSTING IS HAVING TO CONSTANTLY EXPLAIN I'M NOT RESTING UNTIL YOU'RE SAFE.

THEY CARRIED THEIR PARTNER, WINK, HOPING THE FORTRESS WASN'T OVERRUN BY THE UNDEAD.

THEIR HOPES WERE REALIZED. JOTUNHEIM HAD BECOME A SAFE HAVEN FOR THE LIVING.

IT WAS A VERY EFFECTIVE SAFE HAVEN. IN FACT...

...IT WAS HEAVILY DEFENDED.

RAZA KATTUAH AND MANTICORE MADE IT THEIR MISSION TO STOP ANYTHING FROM ENTERING THE FORTRESS.

FIRE!

WHAT?

NO ONE HAD BREACHED JOTUNHEIM'S WALLS IN DECADES...

...BUT RECORDS ARE MADE TO BE BROKEN.

ROAARGH!

WAIT! PLEASE!

WE'VE TRAVELED FOR DAYS.

WE ONLY WANT SHELTER.

WE CAN HELP YOU.

ALSO, IF I WANTED TO, I COULD HAVE ALREADY TELEPORTED YOU OUTSIDE THE WALLS, WHERE YOU'D BE HITTING THE GROUND RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE.

THE ICE CITADEL WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BUILT BY A SUPER-POWERED ALIEN... PROVING SOME NICE STORIES ARE ALSO TRUE.

SURVIVING HEROES GATHERED THERE.

MOST OF THEM HAD THEIR THOUGHTS ON THOSE WHO DIDN'T SURVIVE.

DAMIAN?

MORE HEROES HAVE COME. WONDER WOMAN BROUGHT WONDER GIRL AND SOME OTHER PEOPLE IN HER INVISIBLE JET.

IS THE JET STILL HERE?

UM...IT'S KINDA HARD TO TELL. IT'S INVISIBLE.

ARE YOU GOING TO CHANGE?

I...I DON'T KNOW IF I'M READY TO.

I GET IT. REALLY.

THIS SYMBOL DOESN'T EXACTLY COME FREE OF BURDEN, YOU KNOW?

YOU SAID YOU WOULD HELP.

IT IS TIME TO DO SO.

TWO OF OUR MEMBERS, NIGHTSHADE AND HYVE, WERE SENT TO SCOUT TO THE WEST. THEY HAVE NOT RETURNED.

HEY. THE AERIE JUST FLEW FOR THREE DAYS STRAIGHT. GIVE THEM A FEW HOURS TO--

IT'S OKAY, WINK.

WE WILL SEARCH FOR THEM, MANTICORE.

I THINK THE TAIL IS PART OF SOME KIND OF SUIT, BUT I MEAN, THE LION FACE IS REAL, RIGHT?

HOW DOES THAT EVEN HAPPEN TO A PERSON?

I HAVE WINGS.

YEAH... THAT'S A GOOD POINT.

ALFRED. EXCUSE THE INTERRUPTION.

I BROUGHT TEA. EARL GREY, RIGHT?

I... THANK YOU.

I'M NOT USED TO PEOPLE WAITING ON ME, MASTER KENT.

THERE ARE NO MASTERS HERE, ALFRED.

COULD I HAVE A WORD WITH DAMIAN?

OF COURSE. I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT.

SHOULDN'T YOU BE OUT THERE?

JON CONVINCED ME THIS WAS IMPORTANT.

I THOUGHT A MAN WHO CAN LEAP TALL BUILDINGS WOULD BE ABOVE NEPOTISM.

AND I THOUGHT SO MUCH CYNICISM COULDN'T FIT INTO ONE TWELVE-YEAR-OLD.

BRUCE BELIEVED YOU DESERVED THIS.

AND YOUR FATHER WAS ALMOST ALWAYS RIGHT.

OFTEN IRRITATINGLY SO.

BRUCE *WASN'T* ALWAYS RIGHT.

OF COURSE NOT. WHEN WE'RE YOUNG, FATHERS ARE RARELY EVER RIGHT.

AND THEN WE GROW OLDER, AND WE REALIZE WHAT THEY WERE TRYING TO PROTECT US FROM.

I LIKED YOUR DAD. HE WAS OLD-SCHOOL. JONATHAN KENT WAS AS GENUINE AS HE SEEMED, WASN'T HE?

HE WAS.

I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT...WHAT HAPPENED.

ARE YOU OKAY?

AM I...?

YOU'RE A GOOD YOUNG MAN, DAMIAN.

AND THE RIGHT CHOICE TO TAKE UP THE MANTLE. YOU SHOULDN'T BE AFRAID.

BUT I'M GUESSING IT'S NOT ACTUALLY THE SYMBOL THAT SCARES YOU.

NO.

NO.

IT'S JUST, IF I PUT ON HIS SUIT...

...IT MEANS HE'S REALLY GONE.

BRUCE BECAME A HERO BECAUSE HE LOST PEOPLE HE LOVED. HE FOUGHT EVERY DAY TO STOP THAT FROM HAPPENING TO OTHERS. THE WORLD NEEDS THAT MORE THAN EVER.

I BELIEVE THE WORLD NEEDS *YOU, BATMAN.*

ARE YOU SURE?
I'M CERTAIN.
THE COWL DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.
IT WILL.
IT'S JUST...I DON'T KNOW.
DO I LOOK STUPID?
NO. MASTER DAMIAN...
...YOU LOOK LIKE YOUR FATHER.
THE WORLD HAD A BATMAN AGAIN...

...WE WERE GOING TO NEED HIM.

WINK.

WHAT IS IT?

THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE HORIZON.

AN HOUR AFTER BLACK ADAM HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION, HE HAD INFECTED OR KILLED EVERYONE IN HIS NATION.

AND NOW UNDEAD KAHNDAQ WAS SPREADING AS A WAVE OF DEATH.

MY GOD.

KRAKOOM

YOU OKAY?
WE HAVE TO GO! WE HAVE TO WARN JOTUNHEIM!
WHAT IS IT? WHAT DID YOU SEE?
"AN ARMY IS COMING."

THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE.

JON. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

HEY, CASSIE.

MY DAD AND I WERE SEVERING INTERNET CABLES OFF THE COAST OF IRELAND.

IT'S GONE NOW. THE INTERNET IS DOWN, PERMANENTLY.

I'M GONNA MISS IT... NOT THE BIT THAT TURNS PEOPLE INTO AGENTS OF DEATH, OBVIOUSLY.

SURE. LOOK, I'M NOT QUITE SURE HOW TO TELL YOU THIS...

...BUT I'M PRETTY SURE DAMIAN JUST STOLE THE INVISIBLE JET.

YOU KNOW, THE PROBLEM WITH STEALING AN INVISIBLE JET--?

IT'S YOUR VISIBLE... NESS.

TAKE IT DOWN, DAMIAN.

WANT TO EXPLAIN WHY YOUR FIRST ACT AS BATMAN IS GRAND THEFT AERO?

MY MOTHER IS OUT THERE. I BELIEVE SHE'S IN GOTHAM.

OKAY. BUT THERE'S A WORLD OF UNDEAD MONSTERS OUT THERE, TOO.

IF I GO BACK TO THE FORTRESS, DO YOU HONESTLY THINK YOU CAN STOP ME FROM LEAVING?

I HAVE X-RAY VISION AND SUPER-HEARING.

GOOD FOR YOU. DO YOU HONESTLY THINK YOU CAN STOP ME FROM LEAVING?

I...

FINE. BUT I'M NOT LETTING YOU GO ALONE.

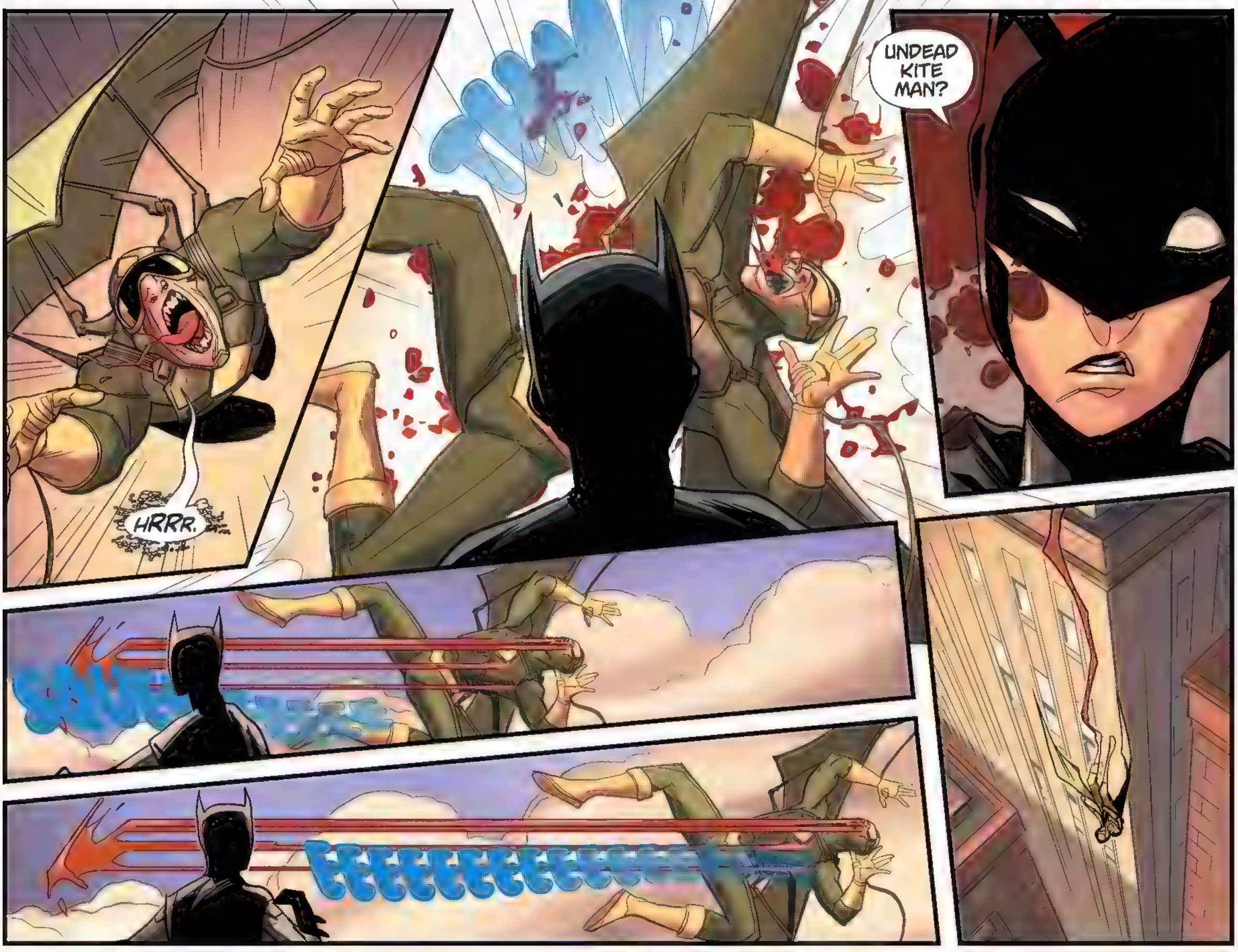
YOU DON'T HAVE TO--

DO YOU HONESTLY THINK YOU CAN STOP ME?

GOTHAM.

I KNOW MY MOTHER WAS IN GOTHAM. BATMAN AND I WERE KEEPING TABS ON HER BEFORE--

INCOMING!


HRRR.
UNDEAD KITE MAN?
SMASH!

THAT WAS...

HEH.

AH HA HA HA HA!

WHY WERE YOU KEEPING TABS ON YOUR MOTHER?

SHE WAS COMING WITH ASSASSINS TO KILL GOTHAM'S MAYOR. MY FATHER AND I WERE ALREADY ON THEIR TRAIL.

WE NEED TO REMEMBER TO WASH THE KITE MAN BITS OFF THE PLANE BEFORE WE GIVE IT BACK TO WONDER WOMAN.

I'VE MISSED SOMETHING, HAVEN'T I?

MY MOTHER IS TALIA AL GHUL. DAUGHTER OF RA'S, THE DEMON'S HEAD, LEADER OF THE LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS.

IT'S KIND OF A SORE SUBJECT. PLEASE DON'T MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT.

THIS IS THEIR MAIN SAFE HOUSE.

HOW IS GOTHAM BANK A LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS SAFE HOUSE?

GOTHAM BANK

BECAUSE MY GRANDFATHER OWNS IT.

THAT'S... A LOT OF UNDEAD.

IF SHE'S ALIVE, MY MOTHER WILL BE IN THE PANIC ROOM, UNDER THE VAULT.

YOU STAY BACK AND WE'LL CLEAR--

SHNG

BOOM

BOOM

HE'S KIND OF, INFURIATINGLY, LIVING UP TO THAT COSTUME, ISN'T HE?

HE REALLY IS.

COME ON.

I CAN'T SEE THROUGH THAT WALL.

OF COURSE NOT. IT WOULDN'T BE MUCH OF A SAFE HOUSE FOR ASSASSINS IF SUPERMAN COULD JUST PEEK IN.

DO YOU THINK SHE'S IN THERE?

LET'S FIND OUT.

HELLO, DAMIAN.

MS. AL GHUL. WE'RE HERE TO RESCUE YOU.

FROM THE PILE OF MONSTERS I'VE MURDERED?

UH... YES?

DAMIAN, WHAT ARE YOU WEARING AND WHY IS THIS ONE WITH YOU?
BECAUSE I'M HIS BEST FRIEND.
IS HE?
YES.
HE SEEMS SO... INNOCENT.
NO. I SUPPOSE NOT. A SHAME.
WE CAN'T ALL BE RAISED BY ASSASSINS, MOTHER.
IT'S REALLY NOT.
AND WHY ARE YOU WEARING THAT?
YOU KNOW WHY.
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.
I WAS... GOING TO GO SEE HIM.
YOU CAN COME... IF YOU'D LIKE.
I HAVE AN INVISIBLE JET PARKED ON THE ROOF.
IT...UH... HAS A FEW BITS OF KITE MAN ON IT.

THE BATCAVE.

WHO BURIED THEM?

JASON TODD.

HOW DO YOU...?

I RECOGNIZE THE SENTIMENT.

DICK GRAYSON
BROTHER
NIGHTWING
THE ONE WHO
GOT TO GROW UP

BRUCE WAYNE
FATHER
MENTOR
BASTARD
BATMAN

TIM DRAKE
FRIEND
ROBIN
THE BEST
OF US

YOU GONNA BE OKAY?

THERE'S SOMEONE HERE.

BEHIND THE DINOSAUR.

HI.

STEPH?

I...I WAS HOPING I'D FIND BATMAN.

IT LOOKS LIKE I FOUND HIM.

DAMIAN...

...I'M SO SORRY.

IT'S OKAY.

YOU'RE WEARING A MASK. AND I'VE GOT YOU.

YOU CAN SAY GOODBYE.

YOUR FATHER MADE YOU SOFT.

EXCUSE ME?

I THOUGHT YOU HAD SUPER-HEARING?

I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A BIT OF A SYMBOL OF PEACE, BUT I'M SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING BREAKING YOUR LEGS NOW.

STOP IT!

MY MOTHER LOVED BRUCE. SHE'S JUST TRYING TO START A FIGHT.

THERE'S NOTHING LEFT HERE. WE SHOULD GET BACK TO THE FORTRESS.

HOLD UP!

IF YOU'RE BATMAN, YOU NEED WHAT BATMAN HAS ALWAYS NEEDED, SO HE ISN'T REDUCED TO A MUSCLED BAG OF REPRESSED FEELINGS IN KEVLAR...

...YOU NEED A *ROBIN.*

THE BATTLE FOR JOTUNHEIM STARTED AFTER MIDNIGHT.

AN ANTI-LIVING ARMY IS COMING.

THERE LOOK TO BE MILLIONS MARCHING HERE WITH BLACK ADAM AT THEIR HEAD.

IF WE SIT HERE, WE DIE.

IF WE TRY TO LEAVE, WE DIE.

EITHER WAY, THERE'S A LOT OF DYING GOING ON.

RAZA, WE HAVE TO ASSUME YOUR FRIENDS NIGHTSHADE AND HYVE ARE WITH THEM, AND THEIR POWERS NOW BELONG TO THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION.

YOU ARE THE ONLY PEOPLE ABLE TO ESCAPE THIS. YOU SHOULD GO. WE WILL UNDERSTAND.

WE'RE NOT REALLY BUILT THAT WAY, MANTICORE. BUT THANKS. YOU'RE THE MOST CARING LION-SCORPION-MAN I'VE EVER MET.

WE NEED HELP.

FROM WHO?

HEROES.

WE DON'T KNOW IF ANYONE ELSE IS LEFT. I WOULDN'T KNOW WHERE TO FIND THEM IF THEY WERE.

THEMYSCIRA.

THE ISLAND OF THE AMAZONS? IT'S HIDDEN.

WE KNOW IT'S IN THE AEGEAN SEA.

THERE ARE 140 ISLANDS IN THE AEGEAN SEA!

SO, ASK FOR DIRECTIONS WHEN YOU GET THERE.

I GET THERE?

YES. I'M NOT LEAVING ALL THESE PEOPLE ALONE TO FACE AN UNDEAD ARMY.

THE AEGEAN SEA IS GIVE-OR-TAKE A THOUSAND MILES AWAY. I CAN'T POSSIBLY SURVIVE AT THE HEIGHT AND THE SPEEDS YOU CAN TRAVEL. AND I AM ***NOT*** SLOWING YOU DOWN.

WINK...

AERIE.

EVERY SECOND IT TAKES YOU TO REALIZE I'M RIGHT IS A SECOND LOST.

TAKE ME OUTSIDE.

WINK

IT WASN'T MUCH OF A PLAN. FIND A SECRET ISLAND AND HOPE THERE'S SOMEONE THERE WHO CAN HELP SAVE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

I'LL COME BACK, WITH OR WITHOUT HELP. I WON'T LEAVE YOU TO FACE THIS ALONE.

I KNOW.

BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THEY HAD ANY OTHER CHOICE.

THE AERIE'S TOP SPEED HAD NEVER BEEN CLOCKED.

BUT THEY BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER SOMEWHERE OVER LEBANON.

BOOM

BY THE TIME THEY'D REACHED THE MEDITERRANEAN, THEY WERE TRAVELING AT SUPERSONIC SPEEDS.

THERE WAS NO WAY THEY WERE GOING TO BE FAST ENOUGH TO BEAT WHAT WAS COMING...

ANYONE UNABLE TO FIGHT, RETREAT INTO THE TOP RINGS OF THE FORTRESS!

ANYONE WHO CAN HOLD A WEAPON, AT THE WINDOWS!

THE UNDEAD ARMY CAN'T REACH US UP HERE, BUT EVEN THESE WALLS WON'T HOLD BLACK ADAM OUT FOR LONG.

I HAVE A PLAN.

I DO, TOO.

THIS SWORD CAN CUT THROUGH ANYTHING. I'M GOING TO CHOP HIM IN HALF.

YOUR PLAN IS GOOD, AND I LIKE ITS SIMPLICITY. BUT I CAN ALSO SEE THAT PLAN ENDING WITH AN UNDEAD ARMY HAVING A SWORD THAT CAN CUT THROUGH ANYTHING. LET'S TRY MY PLAN FIRST.

HE'S COMING!!

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

I NEED YOU TO HIT ***ADAM*** AS SOON AS HE'S IN SIGHT. I NEED YOU TO GIVE HIM A VERY OBVIOUS TARGET. I'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE.

ALL FIRE!!

RRRT

TING

TING

SPNG

SPNG

HRRRR!

GOTCHA.

HUH. IT WORKED.

WHERE DID HE GO?

I TELEPORTED TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN. I LET GO OF HIM HALFWAY.

ADAM'S IN THE MOUNTAIN?

CAN HE SURVIVE THAT?

I HAVE NO IDEA.

RAINBOW BRIDGE

OKAY. I HAVE SOME IDEA NOW.

THE AEGEAN SEA.

THANK YOU.

THE AERIE WAS THE FIRST TO ADMIT BEING ABLE TO TALK TO BIRDS ISN'T ALL THAT USEFUL.

BUT WHEN YOU'RE LOOKING FOR AN ISLAND THAT'S HIDDEN FROM HUMAN EYES, WELL...

CAN I HELP YOU?

I HOPE SO.

YOU AND EVERYONE YOU CAN REACH.

IT'S NOT LIKE A FEW MILLION BLIGHTED ONES MARCHING AND KILLING AND GROWING ACROSS A CONTINENT WASN'T ENOUGH...

...BUT THERE WAS A MOMENT AT JOTUNHEIM WHEN THE RULES CHANGED.

BEFORE SHE WAS TURNED, HER NAME WAS EVE EDEN.

SHE WAS BORN A PRINCESS IN THE LAND OF THE NIGHTSHADES.

AND, AS WELL AS CONTROLLING SHADOWS FROM THAT REALM...

...SHE COULD OPEN DOORWAYS...

...STEP THROUGH...

...AND EXIT ALMOST ANYWHERE. EVEN INTO AN IMPENETRABLE FORTRESS.

AGHH!!

SHRP

RRRRRUMMRUMRRUMBBB!

NO!

RRRRRUMMRUMRRUMBBB!

AS THE ANTI-LIVING ARMY SWARMED THE FORTRESS, THERE WAS STILL WORSE TO COME.

BLACK ADAM CRACKED OPEN THE MOUNTAIN.

KRAK

AND JOTUNHEIM, AND THE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE INSIDE, FELL...

...ONLY TO BE CAUGHT BY A WARRIOR GODDESS.

THOR

WONDER WOMAN ANCHORED A 36,000-TON BUILDING TO A MOUNTAIN. FOR A MOMENT, SHE HELD THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS IN HER HANDS.

=HNNNG=

THE MOMENT DIDN'T LAST LONG.

THERE WERE IMAGES I WISH I'D CAPTURED. MOMENTS I WAS ONLY TOLD ABOUT BY THOSE WHO WERE THERE.

WONDER WOMAN HOLDING A FALLING FORTRESS.

KRAKOOM

THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION WRAPPED IN LIGHTNING AND MAGIC AND THE POWER OF SIX GODS.

THE END WAS COMING FOR DIANA WITH THE SPEED OF HERU.

BUT WAS THERE ANY WAY A WARRIOR PRINCESS WAS LETTING GO OF ALL THE LIVES IN HER HANDS TO SAVE HER OWN?

HADES, NO.

WE DODGED A BULLET THAT DAY.

BECAUSE WONDER WOMAN HADN'T JUST FLOWN OUT OF THEMYSCIRA...

...WITHOUT THINKING AHEAD.

SHE'D MADE A RADIO CALL FIRST...

KOOM

...AND REACHED HER FRIENDS.

I'M... ≥HNGGG≤ HOLDING A FORTRESS, VIC.

I COULD DO WITH A LITTLE HELP.

YOU OKAY, WONDER WOMAN?

I'LL TAKE IT, DIANA.

LET'S GET THESE PEOPLE OUT OF HERE. KEEP BLACK ADAM OFF ME.

I WISH I'D SEEN THE MOMENT GREEN CANARY LIFTED JOTUNHEIM AWAY.

THERE ARE BLIGHTED ONES INSIDE. THEY'RE ATTACKING PEOPLE IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE FORTRESS.

THE OTHERS ARE ALMOST HERE. I'VE LET THEM KNOW. THEY WILL HANDLE THOSE INSIDE.

WE MUST STOP ADAM.

HRRR.

AND WE CAN'T LET HIM TOUCH US.

HRRR.

AGHH!!

CLOSE THE FIRST-FLOOR DOOR!

CLOSE IT!!

AS SOON AS YOU'RE ON *THIS* SIDE OF IT!

WINK. I SAID...

SLAM

...CLOSE THE DOOR!

I'M READY. I WILL TAKE AS MANY OF YOU WITH ME AS I--

WHAT?

YEAH. HI.

SORRY, RAZA. NOBLE SACRIFICES ARE SEVERELY OVERRATED IF THERE'S ANOTHER OPTION.

CRNCH

SOLDIERS.

AS SOON AS THAT DOOR COMES DOWN, FIRE EVERYTHING!

HOLD.

HOLD!

AERIE?

NO.

STAND BACK.

READY TO TAKE OUT A HORDE OF UNDEAD, KENDRA?

WHEN HAVE I NOT BEEN?

CRACK

THEY SAVED SO MANY THAT DAY.

PUSH THEM BACK!

CRK

THEY DROVE THE DEAD BACK INTO THE DARKNESS.

BACK!

THAT WAS A LOT LIKE... DO YOU REMEMBER ONE OF OUR PAST LIVES? WHEN WE FOUGHT THOSE MUMMIES IN THE GIZA NECROPOLIS?

SURE. NOT SOMETHING YOU FORGET, REALLY.

I WISH I'D CAPTURED IT. CARTER AND KENDRA FIGHTING TOGETHER. HAWKMAN AND HAWKGIRL...

...WHILE THEY WERE STILL TOGETHER.

CARTER!

NO!

BEFORE HAWKMAN WAS DRAGGED INTO THE BLACKNESS...

CARTER!!

KENDRA! I CAN'T SEE YOU.

YOU SOUND SO FAR AWAY. I CAN'T--

HRR.

...AND WHATEVER FATE AWAITED HIM IN THE LAND OF THE NIGHTSHADES.

AS THE FIGHT ENDED IN JOTUNHEIM, GREEN CANARY WAS USING EVERYTHING TO PULL THE FORTRESS OUT OF QURAC...

...WHILE THE OTHERS USED EVERYTHING TO KEEP ADAM BACK.

WOOM

SOON THEY CAME TO THE SEA.

AND SOMETHING UNEXPECTED HAPPENED.

ADAM'S ATTACK STOPPED.

WHAT'S IT DOING?

I'M UNSURE. I CAN'T REACH ITS MINDS.

IT'S WAITING.

IT'S TOO FAR FROM THE REST OF THE BLIGHTED ONES. THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION KNOWS IT'S OUTNUMBERED.

THE HORDE CAN'T CROSS THE SEA, BUT IT WILL KEEP SPREADING. WE GET THESE PEOPLE TO SAFETY, THEN WE PLAN HOW TO STOP THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY.

SOMETHING'S COMING IN FAST!

IT'S OKAY...

...THEY'RE FRIENDLY.

WINK?

SHE'S OKAY. SHE'S INSIDE.

THANK YOU.

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO RAISED THE ALARM?

YES.

THANK YOU.

AERIE!

I'M SORRY. I FLEW AS FAST AS I...

ARE YOU HURT?

YOU FLEW FAST ENOUGH. I'M OKAY, JUST...

...NOT EVERYONE IS.

WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.

IF WE'D KNOWN AT THE TIME, I THINK SUPERMAN AND THE OTHERS WOULD HAVE DONE MORE THAT DAY.

HRRR.

MAYBE THEY WOULD HAVE TRIED TO STOP THE ARMY THERE AND THEN, BEFORE THEY TOOK SO MUCH FROM US.

BUT EVEN SUPER-HINDSIGHT IS 20/20.

AS DAWN BROKE, NIGHTSHADE OPENED A DOORWAY...

...AND THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY MARCHED THROUGH A LAND OF NIGHT ACROSS THE SEA.

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #8 COVER PENCILS: KARL MOSTERT COVER INKS: TREVOR SCOTT COVER COLOR: REX LOKUS

"THERE WAS A GIRL WHO LOST A HORSE.

"IT FELL.

"AND WHEN IT FELL, IT WAS BROKEN.

HMMM.

"THE GIRL WAS WITH OTHERS.

"SHE WAS RUNNING FOR A BUS.

"SHE TRIED TO GET HER HORSE BACK.

"AND SHE WAS LEFT BEHIND.

"BUT SHE WASN'T ALONE."

HRRR.

"FORTUNATELY, NOT EVERYONE LEFT HER BEHIND.

"SOMEONE NOTICED SHE WAS GONE."

AGH!

"A DOG."

RRRR!!

"A VERY FORMIDABLE DOG.

"A DOG NAMED ACE."

ACE

ACE! GOOD DOGGY!

"ACE DRAGGED HER OUT OF THERE.

RRRRR!

"HE LED HER TO A BUILDING."

"WHICH IS WHERE I FOUND THEM."

IT'S OKAY, ACE.

I'M NOT GOING TO HURT HER.

DRRR!

NO?

NO.

ARE YOU... ARE YOU TALKING TO THE DOG?

YES. I'M BOBO. HE SAYS YOUR NAME IS AMY.

YOU'RE A MONKEY.

I'M A CHIMPANZEE. *AND* A DETECTIVE.

WERE YOU GOING TO THE GARDEN?

YES.

ME, TOO. WHY DON'T WE ALL GO TOGETHER.

I SAW SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP US.

I JUST NEED TO GO DOWN THERE AND TALK TO THEM.

ACE. WILL YOU HEAR ME IF I'M DOWN THERE?

WILL HEAR.

OKAY. AMY, WHEN ACE MOVES, MOVE WITH HIM.

HELLO?

GOTHAM EQUESTRIAN CENTER

HELLO.

"THERE WAS A HORSE WHO LOST A GIRL."

"SHE FELL.

AGHH!!

"AND WHEN SHE FELL, SHE WAS BROKEN.

CRACK

ACE. BRING AMY, PLEASE.

I'M SORRY. WAS SHE A GOOD HUMAN?

SHE WAS.

IT'S OKAY, AMY. YOU CAN COME OVER.

THIS IS COMET. SHE REALLY WANTS TO MEET YOU.

HELLO, COMET.

SHE SAYS SHE LIKES YOU.

I LIKE HER, TOO.

SNF

YOU SMELL SOMETHING?

DEATH. MOVING.

AMY, JUMP ON! HOLD ON TIGHT!!

"AND WE WERE OFF."

AAGH!

SHRIEK

SCRATCH

HNNG

GET OFF. STAY AWAY!

AMY! IT'S OKAY.

WHY AREN'T YOU LIKE THEM? WHY HAVEN'T YOU TURNED?

BECAUSE THIS WAS AN EQUATION DREAMED UP BY GODS. AND GODS ARE NOTORIOUSLY ARROGANT.

THEY DON'T THINK OF ANIMALS AS SENTIENT.

WHICH IS PRETTY STUPID. BECAUSE IF YOU REALLY WANTED AN UNSTOPPABLE LIVING-DEATH VIRUS...

...THE OBVIOUS THING TO DO IS STICK IT IN MOSQUITOES.

"FOR THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE...

"...I REALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE OBSERVANT.

"I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE ATTACK COMING BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE."

"THERE WAS A GIRL. AND A HORSE.

"THEY FELL."

COMET. GET UP! PLEASE.

PLEASE...

"AND THEN, THEY WERE OUT OF TIME.

"I THOUGHT WE ALL WERE."

GRRR GRR! GRR GRR!

WHAT--? WHAT DID YOU SAY?

GROOOO!

FLYING?

"WHICH JUST GOES TO SHOW..."

"...I DON'T KNOW EVERYTHING."

KO

CHUNK

YOU LIVE?

YES. I LIVE. THANK YOU.

HOLD ON.

STILL GUARDING?

STILL GUARDING.

GOOD DOG.

CLEAR PATH.

"THERE WAS A GIRL WHO LOST A HORSE. AND A HORSE WHO LOST A GIRL.

"THEY FELL TOGETHER.

"BUT THEY WEREN'T BROKEN.

"THEY HELD EACH OTHER TOGETHER."

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #11
COVER ART: DANIELE DI NICUOLO
COVER COLOR: REX LOKUS

THE FIGHT BEGAN BACK IN THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, LOIS.

THE ENTIRE NATION OF KAHNDAQ REDUCED TO MONSTERS.

WHY DIDN'T BLACK ADAM JUST LET US HELP?

SOME PEOPLE CAN'T SEE BEYOND THEIR OWN PRIDE TO ANYTHING OR ANYONE ELSE AROUND THEM.

THEY BELIEVE NEEDING ASSISTANCE IS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS.

WHEN THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE.

ASKING FOR HELP TAKES BRAVERY. IT TAKES STRENGTH.

YOU'RE SUPERMAN, AND YOU'VE NEVER BEEN AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP.

ADMITTEDLY, NOT EVERYONE IS LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE MARRIED TO THIS QUALITY OF HELP.

IT'S OKAY. I'M HERE IF YOU NEED ME, CLARK.

OH MY GOD.

LOIS? SUPERMAN! WHAT WOULD MR. KENT SAY?!

JIMMY! ER...I...

I'M JUST MESSING WITH YOU.

I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN WHO YOU ARE.

WHAT?

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY SUPERMAN PHOTOS I TOOK? I BLEW THEM UP AND MANIPULATED THEM AND STARED AT THEM AS I WORKED. AND I SHARED AN OFFICE WITH YOU.

ALSO, EVERY BORED PHOTOGRAPHER HAS DRAWN GLASSES ON THEIR PHOTOS.

WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING?

HONESTLY? I FIGURED YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT MY SAFETY IF I KNEW YOUR IDENTITY. YOU HAVE A WORLD TO WORRY ABOUT. I DIDN'T WANT TO ADD TO THAT.

ANYWAY, CYBORG WANTS TO SHOW US SOMETHING.

HEROES GATHERED AND BEGAN TO PLAN.

LUTHOR AND I HAVE MANAGED TO CONNECT TO A FEW LEXCORP SATELLITES.

IS THAT WISE? WHAT IF THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION INFECTS THEM?

YEAH. THEY'RE LUTHOR SATELLITES. THEY PROBABLY SHOOT LASERS OR SOMETHING.

THESE ARE SOME OF MY OLDER SATELLITES. THEY'RE RUNNING ON A CLOSED NETWORK. AND THESE ONES DON'T SHOOT LASERS.

THESE ONES?

SO, EVERY CLUSTER COULD MEAN SURVIVORS AT THE HEART OF IT.

WE CAN START A GLOBAL RESCUE OPERATION.

WE'VE STARTED IDENTIFYING LARGE CONCENTRATIONS OF ANTI-LIVING.

WE BELIEVE THEY'RE DRAWN TO LIFE.

THEMYSCIRA HAS AGREED TO TAKE SURVIVORS.

AND POISON IVY WILL OPEN UP THE GOTHAM GARDEN TO REFUGEES...WITH SOME PRETTY EXTREME PROVISOS.

THEN WE START MOVING PEOPLE TODAY. *NOW.* WE WILL NEED TO BE CAREFUL, BUT STRIKE TEAMS WILL BE ASSEMBLED TO--

WHAT?!

YOU WANT TO TAKE WHAT'S LEFT OF THE HUMAN RACE AND PUT THEM IN TWO LOCATIONS?

MOM. PLEASE DON'T.

I'M SORRY, DAMIAN. AM I EMBARRASSING YOU IN FRONT OF ALL THESE PEOPLE IN CAPES AND SKINTIGHT LYCRA?

WOULD YOU PREFER I KEPT MY MOUTH CLOSED WHILE THESE BRILLIANT HEROES CREATE CONVENIENT *ALL-YOU-CAN-KILL BUFFETS* FOR THE UNDEAD?

TALIA IS RIGHT.

THANK YOU, LEX.

IT IS UTTERLY LUDICROUS TO PRIORITIZE THE DEAD OVER THE LIVING.

YOU CAN SEE WHERE THE UNDEAD ARE.

YOU HAVE THESE RIDICULOUS POWERS. DON'T TIPTOE AROUND THEM. ATTACK!

YOU CAN DISINTEGRATE THESE MONSTERS JUST BY LOOKING AT THEM.

PUT YOUR DAMN MORAL CODE ASIDE, FLY OUT THERE, AND WIPE THEM OUT FROM THE @#$%#@ SKY!

BACK OFF.

OUR MOMS ARE FIGHTING.

IT WAS ALWAYS GOING TO HAPPEN.

THANK YOU FOR BRINGING ME HERE.

WE'RE NOT THROWING AWAY BILLIONS OF LIVES.

THEY'RE *NOT* ALIVE.

WONDER WOMAN. YOU'RE A WARRIOR. TALK SOME SENSE INTO SUPERMAN.

THIS IS WAR.

I'VE FOUGHT IN WARS BESIDE SUPERMAN. HE'S NEVER TAKEN A LIFE.

AND WE'VE WON EVERY BATTLE WE'VE FOUGHT TOGETHER.

SUPERMAN. I HONESTLY DON'T BELIEVE THEY'RE ALIVE.

I'M SORRY.

I KNOW SOME OF YOU PROBABLY AGREE WITH TALIA.

I KNOW THIS MAY SEEM STUBBORN OR NAIVE. BUT I WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON THESE PEOPLE.

NOT WHEN THERE IS A SINGLE SLIVER OF HOPE THEY CAN BE SAVED.

WE'RE BETTER THAN THAT. WE HAVE TO BE.

MY GOD. YOU'RE JUST AS BAD AS BATMAN WAS.

THANK YOU.

WE SHOULD FIRST SEND A TEAM TO CENTRAL CITY.

WHY?

BECAUSE SOMETHING STRANGE IS HAPPENING THERE.

"EVERY SINGLE BLIGHTED ONE IN CENTRAL CITY HAD BEEN DRAWN TO A SINGLE BUILDING, LIKE MOTHS TO A FLAME."

DAVID SINGH WAS THE CITY'S POLICE CHIEF.

BLAM

I'VE TAKEN OUT THE ELEVATORS AND BLOCKED THE STAIRWELLS AS MUCH AS I COULD.

BUT THEY'RE STILL DETERMINED. THEY *WILL* FIND A WAY IN...

...UNLESS YOU CAN STOP THEM, HARTLEY.

THE PIED PIPER. A MASTER MUSICIAN ABLE TO HYPNOTIZE ANYONE WITH HIS SONIC FLUTE...

I CAN'T CONTROL THEM.

ALL I SEEM TO BE ABLE TO DO IS *ATTRACT* THEM.

WELL, THAT'S THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF WHAT WE WANT.

HAVE YOU TRIED TURNING YOUR FLUTE UPSIDE DOWN?

DAVID... I CAN'T SAVE YOU.

I KNOW. IT'S OKAY.

I HAVE TWO BULLETS FOR US.

IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE COMFORTING?

MORE PRAGMATIC, I GUESS.

HOW IS IT PRAGMATIC?

MAYBE WE'D *LIKE* BEING UNDEAD?

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A ZOMBIE?

MAYBE IT'S A CONSTANTLY EUPHORIC EXPERIENCE. YOU DON'T KNOW.

ALSO, WHY DO YOU ONLY HAVE TWO BULLETS? FILL THE DAMN GUN IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE THAT MORBIDLY PRACTICAL.

I DON'T WANT TO SCREW UP, SHOOT MY EAR OFF, AND *THEN* BE ATTACKED BY UNDEAD.

THD
THD
THD
THD
THD
THD
HRRR.
THEY'RE COMING.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?
THD
THD
I WANT TO FIGHT BESIDE YOU.
HARTLEY RATHAWAY.
DAVID SINGH.
WHAT THE--?
LOOK OUT!
BANG
BANG

IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT. YOU'RE SAFE NOW.

MARTIAN MANHUNTER?

SORRY ABOUT SHOOTING YOU. I THOUGHT YOU WERE A GHOST.

YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS?

WELL, NO. BUT I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN ZOMBIES A FEW DAYS AGO EITHER. I'M NOT CLOSING MYSELF OFF TO ANYTHING.

WHY ARE THEY ALL HERE?

WHY THIS BUILDING?

BECAUSE OF ME.

AND BECAUSE OF THIS.

*IF ANYONE TOLD ME THE **PIED PIPER** COULD BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE BIGGEST HITTERS IN THE JUSTICE LEAGUE, I WOULD HAVE SAID THEY WERE MAD.*

BUT THAT'S WHERE WE FOUND OURSELVES.

HOPING FOR A MIRACLE FROM A MAN AND HIS FLUTE.

YOU'D THINK AN UNDEAD VIRUS WOULD BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

AND FOR THE MOST PART, IT DID.

CLICK

BUT SADLY, THERE ARE ALWAYS PEOPLE WHO REFUSE TO LOOK BEYOND THEMSELVES.

HEY!

GET RID OF THAT!

DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO, LADY. THERE'S NO INTERNET.

YOU COULD HAVE DOWNLOADED THE THING BEFORE THE INTERNET WENT DOWN. THE RULE IS NO SCREENS FOR A REAS--

YOU SERIOUSLY SO STUPID YOU THINK THIS THING CAME FROM OUR PHONES?

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU? I SAID GET RID OF THAT!

AND I SAID DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO, LADY.

BANG!

WE'RE FIGHTING THE UNDEAD.

WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO FIGHT IGNORANCE, TOO.

THE YOUNGER HEROES WERE CHARGED WITH KEEPING THE PEACE ON NANTUCKET.

THE KIDS ARGUED AGAINST THIS ASSIGNMENT. IT WAS PRETTY OBVIOUS THE ADULTS ONLY PUT THEM ON AN ISLAND TO KEEP THEM SAFE.

YOU SCARED OF THIS, KID?

BUT THEY CERTAINLY HAD SOME PEACE TO KEEP THERE.

CRK

DID THAT MAN SERIOUSLY JUST TRY TO SHOW YOU HIS PHONE!

MOVE. I'M GOING TO BEHEAD HIM.

MOM, PLEASE. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE SETTING AN EXAMPLE.

YEAH. IT'S KINDA HARD TO CLAIM THE MORAL HIGH GROUND IF YOU MURDER PEOPLE.

CRACK

NANTUCKET ISLAND WAS SET UP AS A PROCESSING AREA. REFUGEES WERE BROUGHT THERE FROM ALL OVER NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

IT WAS KNOWN AS THE GATEWAY TO THE GARDEN.

FROM NANTUCKET, SURVIVORS WOULD BE SEEN AND ASSESSED, AND TO BE SAFE, GREEN CANARY WOULD ONLY TAKE A FEW HUNDRED AT A TIME...

NEXT GROUP IS INCOMING.

...TO THE GOTHAM GARDEN.

POISON IVY'S SANCTUARY.

RED! NEW FRIENDS. DO YOU WANT TO WELCOME THEM?

NO. AND YOU DON'T HAVE TO ASK EVERY TIME. MY ANSWER WILL NEVER CHANGE.

FINE. I WILL CONTINUE BEING ENTHUSIASTIC FOR BOTH OF US.

THERE WAS A DAY WHEN IT FELT LIKE THE PLAN WAS WORKING...

...BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

WE DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE BEING HUNTED.

CRK

WHAT?

WE COULDN'T SEE WHAT WAS COMING FOR US...

THUD

...UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.

SPLASH

IS BLACK MANTA BREATHING?

YEP.

IS HE UNDEAD?

NOPE.

IS HE STILL AN EVIL @#$%?

LET'S FIND OUT.

HEY, BLACK MANTA.

CAN YOU HEAR ME? ARE YOU OKAY?

ENOUGH

CASSIE!

OW.

SERIOUSLY? YOU REALLY WANT TO MAKE MORE TROUBLE?

WE KIND OF HAVE ENOUGH OF THAT.

OKAY, I'M AT LEAST BEHEADING THIS ONE.

NO DECAPITATING.

-TUNK

YOUR COMPASSION GOES TOO FAR.

I'VE DEALT WITH BLACK MANTA BEFORE. DAVID HYDE IS RUTHLESS, SADISTIC, AND ENTIRELY OUT FOR HIMSELF. HE WILL NEVER JOIN YOUR SIDE.

THERE ARE ONLY TWO SIDES NOW.

THE LIVING AND THE ANTI-LIVING.

I'M LEAVING.

SURE. GO BE TOTALLY BY YOURSELF IN A WORLD FULL OF LIVING DEATH. THAT'LL END WELL.

DAVID.

JON KENT HAS THAT SAME THING HIS FATHER HAS.

WHEN HE SPEAKS, PEOPLE BELIEVE HIM.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO FACE WHAT'S OUT THERE ALONE.

STAY. WE COULD USE YOU HERE.

I LIKE TO THINK HE GOT THROUGH TO BLACK MANTA IN THAT MOMENT, BUT WE'LL NEVER KNOW.

BECAUSE THAT WAS THE MOMENT THE WORLD TORE OPEN...

...AND THE ANTI-LIVING ARMY SWARMED OUT OF THE LAND OF NIGHTSHADES.

PROTECT THE REFUGEES!

AIIGH!

ALBERT, PUSH THEM BACK!

ATOM SMASHER'S DENSITY, WEIGHT, AND STRENGTH INCREASED AS HE GREW.

HIS SIZE MADE HIM FORMIDABLE...

...VIRTUALLY UNSTOPPABLE...

KOOOM

...AND A VERY OBVIOUS TARGET.

THE YOUNGER HEROES WERE CHARGED WITH KEEPING THE PEACE ON NANTUCKET.

OH NO...

THE KIDS ARGUED AGAINST THIS ASSIGNMENT. IT WAS PRETTY OBVIOUS THE ADULTS ONLY PUT THEM ON AN ISLAND TO KEEP THEM SAFE.

THEY WERE NOT SAFE...

HNNNG!

...THEY WERE TRAPPED AT GROUND ZERO.

NARRGGH!

THERE WERE TWENTY THOUSAND PEOPLE ON NANTUCKET WHEN THE ANTI-LIVING ARMY ATTACKED.

UNLIVING BLACK ADAM AND A MILLION UNDEAD STEPPED OUT OF THE LAND OF NIGHTSHADES...

...AND SEIZED CONTROL OF A GIANT.

HRRR.

THEN, THEY TURNED THEIR ATTENTION TO THE REST OF US.

THE ONLY THING STANDING BETWEEN US AND INSTANT UNLIFE?

SUPERBOY, WONDER GIRL, BLUE BEETLE, BLACK MANTA. BATMAN AND ROBIN. AND TALIA AL GHUL--THE LEADER OF THE LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS.

IGNORE ATOM SMASHER.

THAT'S NOT THAT EASY. HE'S A GIANT.

BLACK ADAM IS THE BIGGEST THREAT. YOU HAVE TO KEEP HIM OFF US.

DAMIAN'S RIGHT.

BLUE BEETLE, SUPERBOY. WITH ME.

JAIME. CAN BLACK ADAM CRACK YOUR ARMOR?

I HOPE NOT.

BUT I WANT TO APOLOGIZE IN ADVANCE IF I GET TURNED AND TRY TO KILL YOU.

OH YEAH. SAME.

90

BLACK MANTA. YOU HAVE ONE JOB. KEEP ATOM SMASHER BACK.

EVERYONE, LISTEN. GET TO THE BOATS!

THEY'LL BE SITTING DUCKS IN THE WATER.

IT'S AN ISLAND. IT'S NOT LIKE THERE ARE A LOT OF ESCAPE OPTIONS.

YOUR GIRLFRIEND'S RIGHT, DAMIAN.

SHE'S NOT MY *GIRLFRIEND*, SHE'S MY *SIDEKICK*.

LET'S JUST GO WITH *FRIEND*, SHALL WE?

IT'S TRUE AND HAS THE ADDED BENEFIT OF NOT BEING SHOCKINGLY PATRONIZING.

WE JUST HAVE TO HOPE YOUR FRIENDS ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP THEM OFF US WHILE WE GET TO THE BOATS.

WE GET TO THE BOATS? I'M NOT RUNNING AWAY.

OF COURSE YOU ARE. DON'T BE STUPID.

I'M PROTECTING THE *PEOPLE.*

I'M COVERING THEIR ESCAPE!

DAMIAN!

MOVE!

HNNNG

YOU--? DID YOU JUST TRY TO SAVE US FROM A GIANT?

YEAH. A LITTLE FUTILE, I KNOW.

STILL, IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS. I CLEARLY NEED TO REASSESS WHAT I THOUGHT OF YOU.

THANKS.

WAIT...

...WHAT DID YOU THINK OF ME?

LIFT!

HNNG

OH NO.

KEEP FLYING!

NOW!

IT'S LIKE THE OLD SAYING GOES...

...THE BIGGER THEY ARE...

...THE LARGER THE WAVE THEY CREATE WHEN THEY'RE DROPPED IN THE OCEAN.

OH, COME ON.

THE WAVE TOOK OUT THE LIVING AND ANTI-LIVING ALIKE.

AND BLACK ADAM STRUCK IN THAT MOMENT OF CHAOS.

HNF!

THE SKY ERUPTED WITH ELECTRICITY.

I SAW THE END COMING FOR US. THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. KNEE-DEEP WATER. ELECTRICITY STRIKING.

KRAAAAA

THEN...

...I SAW A BOY CATCH LIGHTNING.

IT WAS THE LAST THING I'D EVER SEE WITH TWO EYES.

YOU OKAY?

IT DIDN'T TICKLE.

OH NO.

JIMMY!

LOOK OUT.

MFFRRR...

NO!

GET OFF HIM!!

...AND SO OUTMATCHED.

HRRR!

THEY WERE SO BRAVE.

SO LOYAL TO THEIR FRIEND...

WITH HIS LAST BREATH, JON SCREAMED FOR HIS FATHER.

DAD!

AND HALF A WORLD AWAY, CLARK HEARD HIS SON CRY OUT.

DAD!

AND SUPERMAN APPEARED FAR FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET, FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN A LOCOMOTIVE...

...AND VERY, VERY PROTECTIVE.

TWENTY THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE THREATENED ON NANTUCKET ISLAND.

MARTIAN MANHUNTER.

I'M HERE, KAL-EL. IN IVY'S GARDEN.

BLACK ADAM AND HIS ARMY ARE ATTACKING THE REFUGEES ON NANTUCKET ISLAND.

WE NEED EVERYONE WHO CAN GET HERE FAST AND EVERYONE STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD OFF AN ATTACK WHILE WE EVACUATE.

UNDERSTOOD. I'M ESTABLISHING A TELEPATHIC LINK.

DINAH.

WALLACE. BARRY.

DIANA...

...WE'RE NEEDED.

DAMIAN. THE LEAGUE ARE HERE!

AND YOU SAID WE WERE DOOMED.

I NEVER SAID WE WERE DOOMED.

MAYBE NOT WITH YOUR WORDS, BUT YOU SAID IT WITH YOUR BODY LANGUAGE.

WHAT?

YOU WERE DOING YOUR PESSIMISTIC BAT-SLUMP.

I DON'T BAT-SLUMP.

WONDER WOMAN! WE'VE BEEN GETTING EVERYONE TO THE BOATS.

GOOD THINKING.

BARRY. WALLACE.

WE'RE ON IT.

WE'LL GET EVERYONE ON BOARD. BE READY TO CARRY THE SHIPS OUT OF HERE.

J'ONN. THANK YOU FOR COMING.

WHERE'S BLACK ADAM?

I HIT HIM. HARD.

IT SHOULD TAKE HIM A WHILE TO GET BACK UP, BUT WE NEED TO GET EVERYONE ON THE SHIPS AND GET OUT OF HERE...

"...WE CAN'T RISK ANY OF OUR HEAVY HITTERS BEING TURNED."

COME ON. EVERYONE ON THE BOATS.

STILL DETERMINED TO FACE THE APOCALYPSE ALONE, BLACK MANTA?

OR WOULD YOU CONSIDER A LIFT OUT OF HERE?

HRRR.

DAMIA--

KRAM

MOVE!

KRAM

MARTIAN MANHUNTER'S ONE WEAKNESS WAS FIRE.

BUT HE DIDN'T RUN.

HE OPENED HIS MIND AND CALLED OUT. WE ALL HEARD IT.

IS ANYONE ELSE HERE? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

HE STAYED BEHIND, FACING HIS GREATEST FEAR, TRYING TO DRAW ANY SURVIVORS TO HIM.

BUT SOMETHING ELSE CAME.

HRRR.

WE ALL FELT IT.

WE FELT HIS FEAR.

FELT HIS PAIN.

WE FELT HIM PHASE INTO THE SEABED, MOVE DOWN THROUGH THE EARTH.

HIS LAST THOUGHT, TO SAVE US FROM WHAT HE KNEW HE WAS ABOUT TO BECOME.

AND THEN, J'ONN J'ONZZ WAS JUST GONE.

I COULDN'T TELL WHAT HAPPENED NEXT. IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST.

I JUST KNOW SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN ATTACKED.

BLACK ADAM WAS BEATEN BACK.

THE SHIPS ROSE INTO THE AIR.

CLK

AND GREEN CANARY CARRIED THE SURVIVORS AWAY.

BUT NOT ALL OF US SURVIVED.

DAMIAN. WE NEED TO LEAVE.

I CAN TAKE HER FOR YOU.

TWENTY THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE SAVED...

...BUT WE STILL LOST.

THE GOTHAM GARDEN

I'M SORRY, DAMIAN.

I DIDN'T KNOW STEPH LIKE YOU DID.

NO.

DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME ABOUT HER?

STEPH...

...DROVE ME CRAZY!

SHE ALWAYS TRIED TO FIND FUN IN THE MOST INAPPROPRIATE SITUATIONS.

SHE REFUSED TO TAKE ME SERIOUSLY.

SHE MOCKED ME.

WELL, OF COURSE SHE DID.

THAT'S WHAT BIG SISTERS ARE SUPPOSED TO DO.

DAMIAN.

DON'T.

FOR ONCE, MOTHER.

PLEASE. JUST DON'T BE YOU.

I WASN'T GOING TO...

I WASN'T.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I HEARD YOU TALKING.

THERE IS A LAZARUS PIT.

JUST ONE I KNOW OF. AND IT CAN ONLY BE USED ONCE.

I THOUGHT ABOUT USING IT FOR YOUR FATHER, BUT I REALIZED HE WOULD RETURN CORRUPTED, BY THE VIRUS STILL IN HIS MIND.

YOU CAN BRING STEPH *BACK?*

PERHAPS.

BUT THERE'S NO GUARANTEE SHE'LL BE THE SAME.

DAMIAN. THE ONLY WAY YOUR GRANDFATHER HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO SHOW HE CARES IS BY HURTING ANYONE WHO CROSSED ME.

I RECOGNIZE THAT SHORT-COMING IN MYSELF. I'D LIKE TO DO THIS FOR YOU.

I CAN COME WITH YOU.

NO. I CAN MOVE MORE FREELY BY MYSELF. AND BATMAN IS NEEDED HERE...

...THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY WILL BE HERE SOON.

DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END #13
COVER ART: JON SOMMARIVA
COVER COLOR: REX LOKUS

"THEY'RE COMING FOR US.

"MORE THAN A MILLION ANTI-LIVING ARE MOVING IN A DIRECT LINE LEADING RIGHT TO THE GOTHAM GARDEN...

...AND TO THE THREE MILLION PEOPLE CURRENTLY SHELTERING HERE.

THE VIRUS HAS WEAKENED OUR DEFENSES. NOW IT'S COMING FOR OUR HEART.

AT ITS CURRENT PACE, THE ARMY WILL BE HERE BEFORE SUNRISE.

SO FAR, YOU HAVE HIT AND RUN. THAT IS NOT AN OPTION TOMORROW.

IT'S REALLY VERY SIMPLE. TOMORROW YOU WORK TOGETHER TO DESTROY BLACK ADAM.

AND WHEN THE ARMY GETS TO THE GARDEN WALLS, GREEN CANARY DROPS A SHIELD AND WE DROP A WHOLE LOT OF BOMBS ON THEIR SIDE.

NO.

WE ARE *NOT* BLOWING UP A MILLION PEOPLE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. WE'RE NOT. THEY'RE NOT *PEOPLE.*

WE DON'T KNOW THEY CAN'T BE SAVED.

WE *DO* KNOW THEY CAN'T BE SAVED. CYBORG KNOWS. I KNOW. WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS. THEY'RE *DEAD.*

YOU'RE STUBBORNLY DEFENDING *CORPSES.*

I WON'T BE A PART OF THIS.

THEN THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE EVERYONE WILL DIE.

URGH. HOW CAN SOMEONE WITH SO MUCH POWER BE SO WEAK?

RIGHT. GOOD LUCK.

I'M NOT STAYING FOR THE INEVITABLE.

HE'S MY BEST FRIEND, YOU KNOW?

THE MAN YOU'VE SPENT SO MUCH TIME TRYING TO HURT.

HE'S NOT A *MAN.*

NO. SO IT MUST DRIVE YOU CRAZY THAT HE'S SO MUCH MORE *HUMAN* THAN YOU.

EXCUSE ME?

I GET THAT HE SEEMS ALIEN TO YOU. YOU'VE SPENT YOUR WHOLE LIFE LYING AND CHEATING TO GAIN POWER.

WHEREAS SUPERMAN HAS ALL THIS POWER AND HE CHOSE TO BE A REPORTER. A REAL ONE.

EVERY MOMENT HE WASN'T SELFLESSLY SAVING OTHERS, HE CHOSE TO SPEND TELLING THE TRUTH.

DO YOU HAVE A POINT, OR JUST *CUTTING* INSIGHT?

MY POINT IS, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE SMARTEST MAN IN THE WORLD.

PROVE IT.

THINK OF A WAY TO WIN TOMORROW. A WAY WHERE WE DON'T DESTROY A MILLION PEOPLE.

THERE'S NO TIME.

FIND TIME.

KID FLASH. I NEED YOUR ASSISTANCE.

SORRY, LUTHOR. I NEED TO GET BACK OUT THERE. THERE ARE STILL SURVIVORS TRAPPED BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE GARDEN.

THERE'S A VERY GOOD CHANCE NO ONE YOU SAVE TODAY WILL BE ALIVE TOMORROW UNLESS YOU HELP ME.

WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?

TIME.

SIX MINUTES.

THAT'S HOW LONG LUTHOR WAS CONNECTED TO THE SPEED FORCE.

I HAVE IT.

CARE TO SHARE?

ABSOLUTELY NOT.

TO HIM, IT WAS DAYS.

AND AT THE END OF IT...

YOU CAN RETURN TO YOUR RESCUES. THEY MAY NOT BE FUTILE AFTER ALL.

I AM A VERY SMART MAN. I'VE RUN EVERY SCENARIO OVER AND OVER. I KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TOMORROW.

IT'S GOING TO BE A BLOODBATH.

"SUPERMAN WON'T DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

"HE WILL WORK TO PROTECT EVERYONE, AND IN SO DOING, HE WILL PROTECT NOTHING.

"HIS COMPASSION WILL BE OUR UNDOING.

"AND WHEN SUPERMAN IS TURNED, OR WONDER WOMAN, OR THE FLASHES, IT WILL BE THE END.

BUT I KNOW HOW THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY IS GOING TO ACCESS THE GARDEN.

THERE'S GOING TO BE A MOMENT.

A SINGLE MOMENT, FOR YOU...

"WE'RE GOING TO LOSE IF WE RELY ON OUR HEROES."

...PIED PIPER.

IF WE MISS THIS MOMENT, I BELIEVE EVERYONE WILL DIE.

SO NO PRESSURE?

IF YOU TELL THE LEAGUE, THEY'LL NEVER LET YOU GO THROUGH WITH THIS.

I KNOW.

WHICH MEANS YOU CAN'T ASK FOR THEIR HELP.

AND THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN, WINK.

MAN, THIS SUCKS.

IT ***DOES SUCK***. BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN FIND.

FINE. I'LL DO IT.

OF COURSE YOU WILL.

I NEED TO GO. I HAVE ONE MORE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE TO PUT IN PLACE.

AND WHAT DO WE DO?

I SUGGEST YOU SPEND THE TIME YOU HAVE LEFT WITH YOUR LOVED ONES.

WONDER WOMAN.
LEX. I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE HELPING WITH THE EVACUATION.
I'M NOT.
YOU ARE NOW.
KIDS. JUMP ON THE ARMORED MAN.
THIS SUIT IS WORTH THREE BILLION DOLLARS.
NO IT ISN'T. BECAUSE MONEY ISN'T WORTH ANYTHING ANYMORE.
WHICH I WELCOME.
ALSO, ARE YOU REALLY WORRIED THESE KIDS WILL DAMAGE A SUIT DESIGNED TO STAND AGAINST SUPERMAN?
NO. I'M WORRIED THEY'LL MAKE IT *STICKY*.
THANK YOU.
HOLD ON.
WHAT DID YOU WANT, LUTHOR?
TO TELL YOU I MAY KNOW HOW TO BEAT BLACK ADAM. BUT I REQUIRE SOMETHING FROM YOU.
AND WHAT DO YOU REQUIRE?
NOT HERE...

"...OUTSIDE."

RRRH!

HOW DID YOU KNOW?

I DIDN'T KNOW. I SUSPECTED.

THIS IS THE WAY.

YES.

BUT IF IT WORKS, AFTERWARD YOU WILL STILL HAVE TO DO WHAT SUPERMAN CAN'T. YOU WILL HAVE TO END BLACK ADAM.

I KNOW.

AND YOU'LL STAY OUT OF MY WAY WHILE I DEAL WITH THE REST OF THE ARMY?

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE IN YOUR PLAN?

JUST TWO. TWO SACRIFICES TO POTENTIALLY SAVE THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE.

WHO ARE THEY?

NO. YOU MAY DO SOMETHING STUPID. I CAN'T RISK THAT...

"...I WON'T SAY."

WINK? WHAT DID LUTHOR WANT?

ARE YOU OKAY?

I'M FINE, DAVID.

SOUNDS CONVINCING.

WELL, THERE IS AN ARMY OF THE UNDEAD HEADING OUR WAY, AERIE.

I GUESS THAT'S PRETTY HARD TO IGNORE.

YEAH. IMPENDING DOOM IS DISTRACTING.

YOU DON'T THINK WE CAN WIN?

IT'S NOT... HONESTLY, I'M ALMOST SURE WE'LL WIN.

IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER, WHATEVER HAPPENS TOMORROW IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO BOTH OF US.

YOU SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP, HARTLEY.

I DON'T WANT TO SPEND ANY TIME ASLEEP TONIGHT.

I'LL SLEEP TOMORROW.

I DON'T KNOW WHY I'M DOCUMENTING THIS.

IT JUST FEELS LIKE... THERE SHOULD BE A RECORD. A RECORD OF THIS MOMENT. OF THESE HEROES.

I WANT THEM TO BE REMEMBERED.

THERE SHOULD BE A RECORD OF THEIR SACRIFICE.

I MEAN, I'M NEVER GOING TO FORGET WHAT I WAS SAVED FROM. HOWEVER LONG I LIVE, I WILL LIVE WITH THE REMINDER.

BUT I WANT EVERYONE TO REMEMBER THE HEROES WHO FOUGHT FOR THE LIVING, AFTER TOMORROW.

TOMORROW COULD BE THEIR LAST DAY.

I'M NOT SO SURE, JIMMY. I THINK WE HAVE SOME HOPE.

REALLY? YOU THINK IT WORKED?

ABSOLUTELY. IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU PLAYED LUTHOR PERFECTLY.

BEFORE IT BEGAN, WE SAID OUR GOODBYES.

YOU TWO READY?

IT'S NOT REALLY SOMETHING YOU CAN BE READY FOR.

NO. I GUESS NOT.

YOU'RE ON THE WALL?

YEAH.

I'D TELL YOU TO BE CAREFUL, BUT I KNOW THAT'S NOT REALLY AN OPTION.

JUST... DON'T DO ANYTHING RECKLESSLY STUPID.

THANKS.

I MEAN THAT WITH LOVE.

I KNOW.

JON. CASSIE. TIME TO GET IN PLACE.

DAMIAN. I KNOW YOU'RE NOT REALLY A HUGGER.

SO JUST STAND THERE...

...AND WE'LL DO ALL THE WORK.

THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY ARRIVED JUST BEFORE DAWN.

POISON IVY'S GARDEN HAD KEPT OUT EVERYTHING THE VIRUS HAD THROWN AT IT UNTIL THAT MOMENT.

BUT THAT MOMENT, BLACK ADAM STRUCK.

WE WERE BREACHED...

AAAAGH!

...WHICH WE WERE EXPECTING.

NOW!

HRRR!

IT WAS LEX'S PLAN. BUT IT PUT OUR HEROES IN SO MUCH DANGER.

DON'T LET HIM TOUCH YOU!

DRAG HIM DOWN!

I CAN'T HOLD HIM!

HRRR.

CRRK

KRAK

SUPERBOY AND WONDER GIRL WERE UNDER VERY STRICT INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO JOIN IN UNTIL BLACK ADAM WAS PINNED...

CASSIE?

YEAH.

...WHICH THEY BOTH IGNORED COMPLETELY AS SOON AS THEIR HEROES LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE IN TROUBLE.

TOONTI

INSIDE THE GARDEN, HEROES RISKED EVERYTHING AND FOUGHT THE ANTI-LIFE EQUATION'S BIGGEST WEAPON...

...WHILE OUTSIDE, OTHERS PREPARED TO FACE EVERYTHING ELSE.

GET READY! DEFEND THE WALLS.

THEY WON'T ATTACK THE WALLS. THE EQUATION ISN'T THAT STUPID.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING, LUTHOR?

ARE YOU READY, WINK?

I GUESS.

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING DOWN THERE.

"NIGHTSHADE!

"SHE'S OPENING A DOORWAY!"

I CAN TAKE HER!

GOOM

NO!

WHAT THE HELL?

NOW, PIPER!

WHAT?

GOODBYE, DAVID.

HARTLEY? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I LOVED YOU, AERIE.

I'M SORRY.

WINK?

SEE YA.

WINK

WHAT DID YOU DO?

WHERE DID THEY GO?

ANSWER THEM, LUTHOR! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

I PROBABLY SAVED US ALL.

YOU'RE WELCOME.

THIS WAS ALWAYS LUTHOR'S PLAN.

HE KNEW THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY WOULD USE THE LAND OF NIGHTSHADES TO TRY TO GET INTO THE GARDEN...

...SO HE SET A TRAP.

PLAY!

PIED PIPER COULD CONTROL PEOPLE WITH HIS MUSIC, BUT HE COULD ONLY ATTRACT THE ANTI-LIVING.

LUTHOR REALIZED HE COULD WORK WITH THAT.

RIGHT. WELL, YOU CERTAINLY HAVE THEIR ATTENTION.

KEEP PLAYING. I'LL KEEP US AHEAD OF THEM.

HOW ARE WE LOOKING OUT THERE, LUTHOR?

ABOUT A TENTH OF THE ARMY HAS CROSSED OVER.

THAT'S... NOT A LOT.

YOU! ARE THEY IN THERE?

DID YOU SEND THEM INTO *THAT?*

LUTHOR? GIVE US AN UPDATE. HOW LONG?

KEEP HARTLEY PLAYING. KEEP ATTRACTING NIGHTSHADE TO YOU.

YOU DON'T DIE UNTIL I SAY.

LEX LUTHOR HAD SENT TWO HEROES TO DIE TO SAVE HUMANITY.

WE HAVE TO KEEP MOVING, HARTLEY!

AND... YOU CAN'T RESPOND. OF COURSE.

YOU HAVE TO KEEP PLAYING OR EVERYONE DIES.

I HAD A MUSIC TEACHER AT SCHOOL WHO HAD A SIMILAR MENTALITY.

REALLY SUCKED ALL THE ENJOYMENT OUT OF THE CELLO, YOU KNOW?

WINK.

THE LAST OF THE ANTI-LIVING HAVE ENTERED THE LAND OF NIGHTSHADES.

IT'S TIME.

OKAY... BUT WE HAVE AN ISSUE.

THE PROBLEM WITH A MILLION UNDEAD SWARMING TOWARD YOU IS IT'S NOT SO EASY TO FIND AND KILL A SINGLE ONE.

WINK!

AERIE? WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?

THIS IS A ONE-WAY TRIP. AS SOON AS WE KILL NIGHTSHADE, THE DOORWAY TO THIS LAND CLOSES.

YEAH. I ASSUMED IT WAS SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

YOU *LEFT* ME.

TO FIGHT FOR THE *FUTURE* OF THE *WORLD.*

I'M NOT INVESTED IN THE FUTURE WITHOUT YOU IN IT.

WE'RE *NOT* COMING BACK.

AND I'M *NOT* COMING BACK *WITH* YOU.

ARE WE ARGUING OR ARE WE SAVING THE WORLD?

FINE.

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

THEN I GUESS YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T LET YOU ABANDON ME.

THE PLAN *WAS* TO SHOOT NIGHTSHADE, BUT WE HAVE NO IDEA WHERE SHE IS.

THE OTHER PART OF LUTHOR'S PLAN WAS SIMPLE.

I KNOW YOU CAN SPEAK.

SAY "SHAZAM."

HRRR.

THE LASSO OF TRUTH COMPELS YOU. SAY IT!

SHA...

...ZAM!

HEAR ME. YOU WILL NOT END US.

WE ARE NIMBLER THAN DEATH. WE ARE MORE RESILIENT THAN A VIRUS. THE HUMAN RACE WILL SURVIVE YOU.

YOU WILL CEASE...TO EXIST. YOU... WILL FALL.

SOME OF US MAY FALL, BUT NOT ALL. AND NOT TODAY.

IN LUTHOR'S PLAN, WONDER WOMAN WAS SUPPOSED TO SNAP ADAM'S NECK ONCE HIS POWER WAS GONE, TO STOP THE VIRUS FROM REPEATING THE WORD AND REGAINING BLACK ADAM'S POWER.

BUT SUPERMAN CHANGED THE PLAN.

A COMBINATION OF X-RAY VISION, MICROSCOPIC VISION, AND HEAT VISION.

MICRO-SURGERY.

TO SEVER BLACK ADAM'S VOCAL CORDS.

WHERE ARE YOU?

THERE.

WINK! DO IT!

GOODBYE, ANY CHANCE OF GETTING OUT OF HERE.

CHOK

CHZZ

AIIGH!

CHAK

AERIE!

HNNG... GET US AHEAD OF THEM!

NO. WE STAY HERE.

PIPER!

YOUR FLUTE! YOU CAN'T STOP!

YES, I CAN.

I'M DONE PLAYING.

THUNK

WINK AND PIPER DID IT. THE DOORWAY IS CLOSED.

THE ANTI-LIFE ARMY IS FOREVER TRAPPED IN THE LAND OF NIGHTSHADES.

WE'D LOST SO MANY SINCE THE VIRUS HIT.

SO MANY PEOPLE HAD GIVEN THEIR LIVES...

WHERE'S HARTLEY? WHAT DID YOU DO?

I DID NOTHING. HE CHOSE THIS. YOU SHOULD BE PROUD OF HIM. HE CHOSE TO--

...WE DESERVED A WIN.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU SAID "I'M DONE PLAYING."

IT JUST CAME TO ME.

LIAR.

OKAY. I'VE PRACTICED IT FOR YEARS.

OH, HEY. I GRABBED YOUR FLUTE. IT'S FULL OF BRAIN BITS AND EYEBALL, BUT DO YOU WANT IT BACK OR...?

I'LL MAKE ANOTHER ONE.

GOOD CALL.

YOU CAME BACK.

YEAH. NOBLE SACRIFICES ARE SEVERELY OVERRATED IF THERE'S ANOTHER OPTION.

NONE OF US EXPECTED TO LIVE ANOTHER DAY. BUT I LEARNED LONG AGO NEVER TO UNDERESTIMATE HEROES.

I WANTED TO SPEAK TO YOU.

ALL OF YOU.

I KNOW YOU'RE ALL SCARED.

I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU'VE LOST.

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED. BUT YOU'RE STILL HERE. WE'RE STILL HERE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT COMES TOMORROW...

...BUT I KNOW THIS TRUTH.

IF WE ARE TOGETHER, WE CAN OVERCOME ANYTHING.

I BELIEVE IN ALL OF YOU. I BELIEVE IN ***US***. WE ***WILL*** OVERCOME THIS VIRUS.

UNTIL THEN, WE WILL CARE FOR EACH OTHER AND KEEP EACH OTHER SAFE.

THIS IS ***NOT*** THE END OF THE WORLD. WHILE WE STILL BREATHE, WHILE WE STILL FIGHT, WHILE WE STILL ***RESIST***, THERE IS ALWAYS ***HOPE***.

THE END.

BEHIND THE SCENES!

A LOOK AT THE MAKING OF *DCEASED: HOPE AT WORLD'S END*!

ART BY RENATO GUEDES

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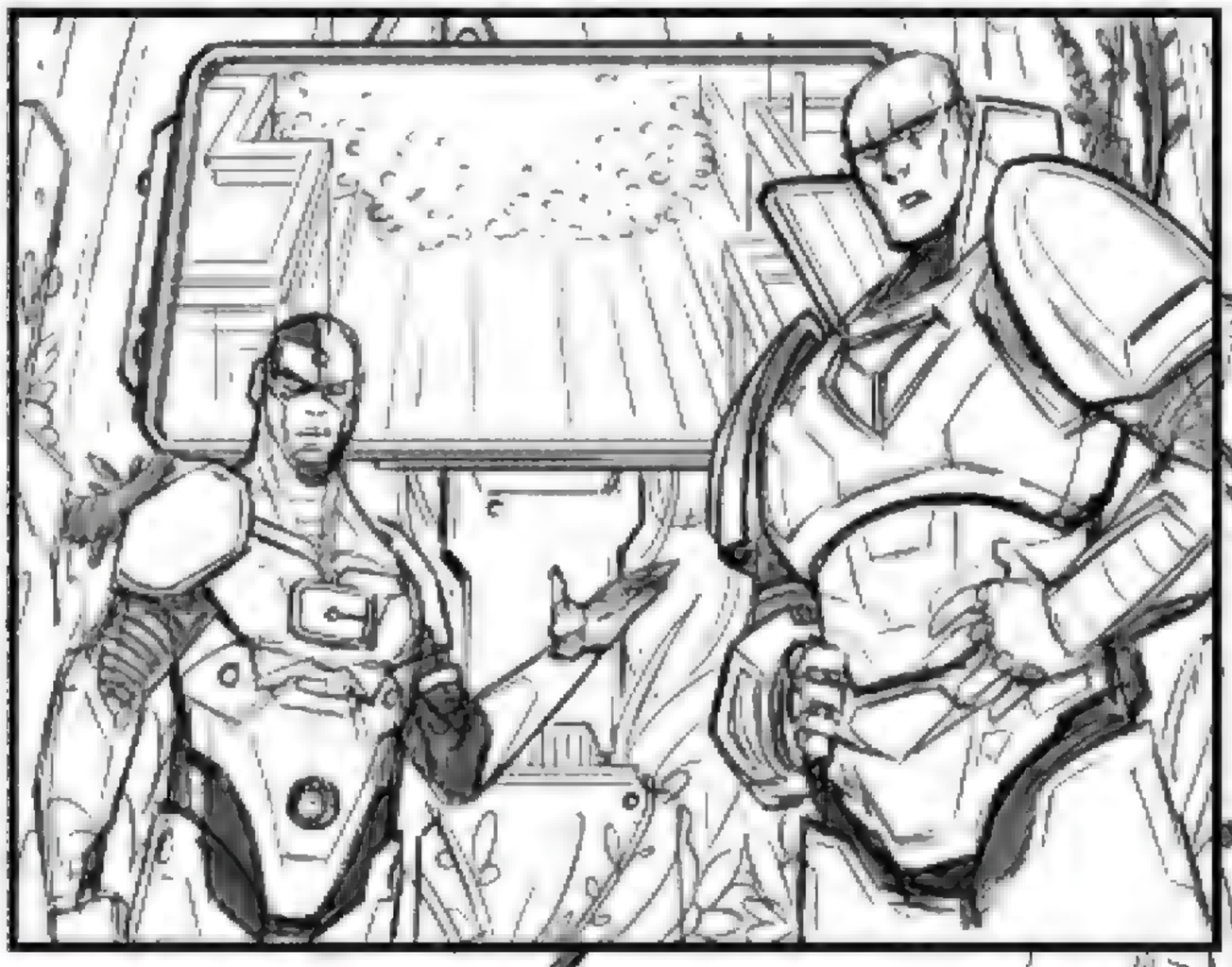
ART BY JON SOMMARIVA



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IN EARTH'S DARKEST HOUR, HEROES WILL BRING HOPE TO A DOOMED PLANET!

The Anti-Life Equation has infected over a billion people on Earth. Heroes and villains have fallen, as have entire nations. In the immediate aftermath of the destruction of Metropolis, Superman and Wonder Woman spearhead a plan to try to stem the tide of infection and protect survivors. The Anti-Life Army is on the march, however, corrupting and destroying everything in its path.

The Anti-Life War has only just begun!

The *New York Times* bestselling writer of *DCeased*, **Tom Taylor**, joins forces with some of the best artists in the industry to tell an epic adventure! Collects *DCeased: Hope at World's End* #1-15.

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SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN... THIS MONSTER!"